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LOXAHATCHEE RIVER WATER QUALITY: A MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL ISSUE

The Area Planning Board is preparing a water quality management study of the Loxahatchee River Area. The study, Planning Area Analysis: Water Quality Management, A Multi-Jurisdictional Concern, Loxahatchee River Planning Area consists of a detailed description of the Planning Area, an analysis of the existing water quality management considerations within the area along with a presentation of potential water quality problems and the development of recommended implementation roles for local jurisdictions. The study is funded, in part, by a grant from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. (Copies available July, 1979)

THE PLANNING AREA

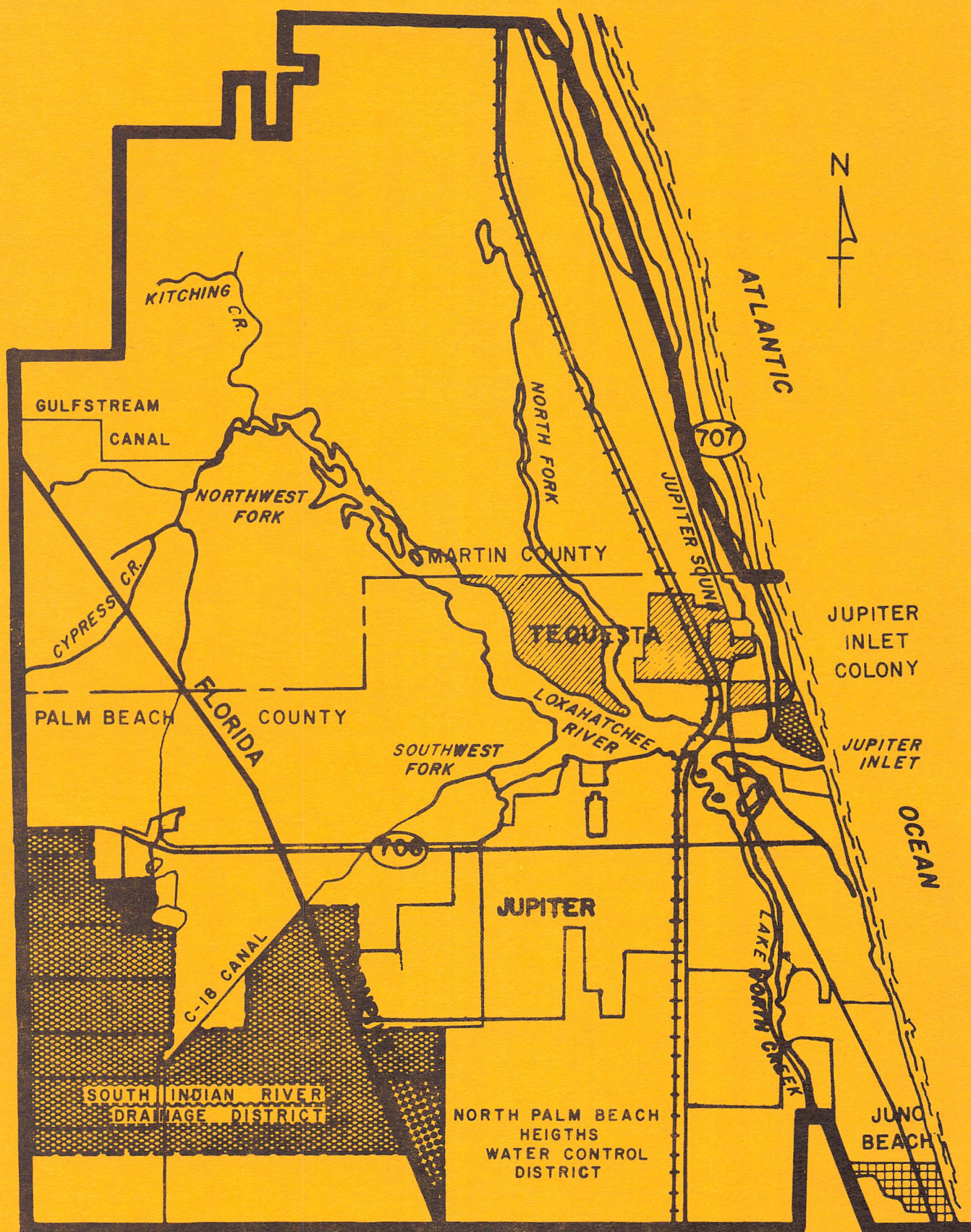
The Planning Area is approximately 72 square miles in size. It extends northward into Martin County to the northern most boundary of Jonathan Dickinson State Park, south approximately to Donald Ross Road, and west from the Atlantic Ocean to approximately 2.5 miles west of the intersection of Indiantown Road and the Florida Turnpike (See Map). The study analyzes the many local jurisdictions within the Planning Area that have partial authority in the management of water quality. They include Palm Beach County, Martin County, Juno Beach, Jupiter, Jupiter Inlet Colony, Tequesta, Area Planning Board of Palm Beach County, South Florida Water Management District, North Palm Beach Water Control District, Northern Palm Beach County Water Control District, South Indian River Drainage District, Loxahatchee River Environmental Control District (Lox-ENCON), Jupiter Inlet District and the Loxahatchee Council of Governments. Each has the capability to play a significant part in water quality management in the Planning Area. However, to develop a truly effective comprehensive water quality management system their capabilities must be oriented toward the achievement of common water quality goals.



Recreational value of the Loxahatchee River.

WATER QUALITY GOALS

While water quality is a multi-jurisdictional issue, statutory and political realities necessitate that certain aspects of the problem be dealt with at the local government level. This means that, while goals, objectives and implementation strategies are established at an areawide, regional, state or federal level, much of the implementation burden rests with local governments. In the case of water quality planning, a national goal has been established by Congress in the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972 (PL 92-500) as amended. The national goal is for "fishable and swimmable waters by 1983 and the elimination of the discharge of pollutants into the nation's waters by 1985." Section 208 of that Act establishes a program of federal assistance to local governments to develop the means of implementing the national goal for specific areas of the country. The Area Planning Board of Palm Beach County (APB), was designated as the recipient of the 208 grant for Palm Beach County and part of Martin County in 1975. Since that time, the APB has been working closely with local governments to devise the means to implement the federal goal.



MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL PLANNING METHOD

Coordination of planning efforts at various levels of government is extremely important because: 1) water pollution does not stop at political boundaries; and 2) cost-effective solutions can be developed only if "everyone does their own share." Local, areawide, regional and state governments have all become involved in water quality management. Each level of government involved responds to its perceived role in the overall system by developing a set of objectives and strategies. These strategies are oriented to assist in the achievement of the National goal. Each program developed requires the cooperation of local governments. However, as is the case with such programs, so many higher level governments and agencies are involved that local governments find it difficult to understand what their roles should be, much less implement them. In the case of water quality, the 208 program was created to channel coordinated local government actions to achieve the national goal. To do this, a planning tool had to be developed that would not only result in coordination of local water quality planning activities with regional and state programs, but also in cooperative efforts at the local government level. The Multi-Jurisdictional Planning Method was developed by the APB to achieve this dual purpose. Due to funding limitations, the entire area could not be addressed so a specific planning area had to be selected. The Loxahatchee River Planning Area was selected because local governments have demonstrated a willingness to actively participate in cooperative water pollution control efforts.

The Multi-Jurisdictional Planning Method is a logical series of steps which allow for:

- 1) delineation of a common set of implementation strategies oriented to coordinating local government activities with those of higher level governments;
- 2) identification of the potential tools and practices available to implement the stated strategies; and

- 3) definition of realistic implementation roles for each of the local government entities in the planning area.



Natural and Scenic features along the River.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

A primary objective of the Planning Area Analysis Study is to foster intergovernmental coordination in an effort to attain water quality goals. The study will provide information concerning the water quality management programs of participating government agencies, including water quality management objectives, and by combining each agencies' strategy statements, a coordinated set of recommended implementation strategies for local governments can be prepared. This information will assist local governments in developing a program consistent with those agencies' objectives and strategies. The study will also recommend general implementation roles for local governments in the Planning Area based upon their demonstrated capabilities. It is anticipated that this will provide the basis for developing a coordinated areawide water quality management program. A final objective of the study is to foster a spirit of cooperation toward achieving the common goal of clean water.

The continuing effort of abating future water quality problems and alleviating current problems will require additional study and analysis in the Loxahatchee River Area. Water quality problems are to be further defined, and based on those results, best management practices can be determined. In turn they can be used to implement practical solutions. The institution of management roles by the participating local governments must be financially feasible, beneficial to the local jurisdictions, and carried out with the maximum amount of intergovernmental coordination.



Jupiter Inlet — The mouth of the Loxahatchee River

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